

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 SCCT-01 CU-02 SY-05 SCA-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /070 W

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R 170907Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5553

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 9807

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, RP

SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION PLOT REINVESTIGATION CONTINUES

1. REINVESTIGATION OF LOPEZ-OSMENA ASSASSINATION PLOT RESUMED JULY 16. JULY 17 PRESS DEVOTES CONSIDERABLE SPACE TO ACCOUNT OF PROSECUTION WITNESS ALEXANDER VILLALON, WHO TOLD PANEL OF 1970 LIBERAL PARTY PLOT TO VILIFY PRESIDENT MARCOS PREPARATORY TO FORCEFUL TAKEOVER OF GOVERNMENT. ACCORDING TO VILLALON,WHO HAS BEEN UNIVERSITY STUDENT FOR LAST 9 YEARS AND IS EMPLOYED BY MEDIA PRODUCTION CENTER, FORMER SENATORS SERGIO OSMENA, JR., BENIGNO AQUINO, JOVITO SALONGA AND GERARDE ROXAS ALL MET FEB 2, 1970, ONLY A FEW DAYS AFTER VIOLENT YOUTH DEMONSTRATIONS IN FRONT OF CONGRESS AND MALACANANG TO PLAN CAMPAIGN. DAILY EXPRESS REPORTED VILLALON'S TESTIMONY WAS ESSENTIALLY SAME AS THAT HE GAVE FEB. 23, 1970, TO JOINT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE INVESTIGATING CAUSES OF YOUTH UNREST AND STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS. PROSECUTION PRESENTED AS "DOCUMENTATION" CLIPPINGS FROM DEFUNCT MANILA CHRONICLE DETAILING 1970 STATEMENTS OF SENATOR TANADA (CO-CHAIRMAN OF JOINT CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATIVE COMMITTEE) TO THE EFFECT THAT IF VILLALON CHARGES TRUE, THIS WOULD "GRAVELY IMPLICATE" LEADING MEMBERS OF THE OPPOSITION PARTY.

2. VILLALON TESTIMONY ALSO CONCERNED SENATOR OSMENA'S BACKING OF STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS AND SENATOR AQUINO'S ALLEGED PROMISE OF ARMED SUPPORT FROM HIS FOLLOWERS IN TARLAC IN TAKEOVER BID.

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VILLALON ALSO CLAIMED EUGENIO LOPEZ, JR., EXPRESSED SUPPPORT FOR

PLOT BY PROMISING CONDUCT "HATE MARCOS" CAMPAIGN IN CHRONICLE.

3. AMCIT LEHMAN WAS EXCUSED FROM PARTICIPATING IN HEARING SINCE MATTERS DISCUSSED OCCURRED TWO YEARS BEFORE HE ARRIVED IN PHILLIPPINES.

4. DURING CODEL MATSUNAGA VISIT WITH OPPOSITION JULY 3, SENATOR ROXAS TOLD EMBOFF HE EXPECTED EFFORT WOULD BE MADE TO LINK HIMSELF AND HIS COLLEAGUES TO ASSASSINATION PLOT. ROXAS INDICATED CHARGE WAS RIDICULOUS BUT NOT SURPRISING GIVEN WHAT WAS GOING ON IN COUNTRY.

COMMENT: IT IS HARD TO SEE UTILITY OF RESURRECTING INCIDENTS WHICH TOOK PLACE 5 1/2 YEARS AGO AND SEEM VERY MUCH IN KEEPING WITH ROUGH-AND-TUMBLE POLITICS OF OLD SOCIETY. INTRODUCTION OF OLD NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS AS "DOCUMENTATION" MARKS FURTHER DEGENERATION OF QUASI-JUDICIAL "REINVESTIGATION" PROCESS. WHAT MARCOS THINKS HE CAN GAIN FROM THIS TACTIC (WHICH IS SIMILAR TO TACTIC IN AQUINO CASE, I.E., DREDGING UP ALLEGED MISDEEDS WHICH TOOK PLACE YEARS AGO) IS UNCLEAR.
SULLIVAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ASSASSINATION, PLOTS, INVESTIGATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 JUL 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: greeneet
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975MANILA09807
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750247-0357
From: MANILA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750747/aaaabpyb.tel
Line Count: 82
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 JUL 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <19 NOV 2003 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ASSASSINATION PLOT REINVESTIGATION CONTINUES
TAGS: PINT, RP, (OSMENA), (LOPEZ), (MARCOS, FERDINAND)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006